

I was able to offer a \$300 million effort on behalf of our colleagues and all Floridians to preserve our most vital natural resource in Florida, which is water, and our Everglades National Park, which is a treasure for generations to come.

But it is obviously today more the work of Marjory Stoneman Douglas that has brought us here today, both to honor her life, celebrate her presence, eulogize a tribute to her, the preservation of something so vitally important to over 14 million Floridians and actually the entire United States, the preservation, the lifeblood of Florida, the Everglades National Park.

ISSUES AFFECTING HAWAII

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I have in my hand the Asian American and Pacific Islander Journal of Health here from the autumn issue in 1993. It addresses the health status of Kanaka Maoli, the indigenous Hawaiians. It is written by my good friend Dr. Richard Kekuni Blaisdell.

In the process of reviewing this, Mr. Speaker, you will find that the purpose is to summarize the current health status of the Kanaka Maoli, the indigenous Hawaiian people, with historical background, the underlying factors responsible for the indigenous Hawaiian health plight and recommendations.

The principal findings, Mr. Speaker, are that the indigenous Hawaiians continue to have the worst health and socioeconomic indicators of the various ethnic groups who call their home Hawaii: cardiovascular disorders, cancer, diabetes, obstructive lung diseases, maternal and infant ill health, alcohol problems, obesity, major life-style risk factors, societal factors such as depopulation, foreign transmigration, colonial exploitation, cultural conflict and racism.

Since 1990, Mr. Speaker, as a result of our native Hawaiian health programs funded here in the Congress and under our auspices, native Hawaiian communities have established five island-wide native Hawaiian health care systems to improve availability, accessibility, and acceptability of health services to all of the indigenous Hawaiian people, to provide them with resources.

The health status is a grim one, Mr. Speaker, and I have to bring to your attention and to the rest of my colleagues the important matters which we have been addressing by congressional action and are now compromised.

The House Committee on the Budget yesterday released a proposed budget for the Federal Government for the coming year. Mr. Speaker, I am saddened, not just outraged, but saddened by the effort contained in that proposal to eliminate funding for the native Hawaiian health care programs. Why the

leadership of the Committee on the Budget and the leadership, Mr. Speaker, in the majority Republican Conference, has chosen to attack native Hawaiian health courtrooms is beyond me.

The program addresses the documented needs of Hawaii's native citizens in a culturally relevant context. Of all of the races of people in the islands of Hawaii, the native Hawaiian people have had the most difficult times in health and social indicators. Why it is a position of the Republican majority to attack native Hawaiians is beyond my grasp at this time, Mr. Speaker.

They are hurting people in the lowest socioeconomic status with the highest overall mortality rate, the highest cancer mortality rate, the highest accident rate, the highest years of productive life lost to chronic disease, the highest infant mortality rate. I could go on with this, Mr. Speaker. It is a litany that we are trying to overcome.

These grim statistics can be attributed to the imposition of foreign cultures and practices upon the native Hawaiian people. Only since the 1988 introduction of the native Hawaiian health program have we begun to turn these statistics around. We need the budget for it, and we have achieved a balanced Federal budget in the process. I voted consistently to achieve that goal.

Mr. Speaker, I will end my remarks now, but will put forward the statistics as well as the background on the proposal to end these programs for native Hawaiians by the majority. I hope, Mr. Speaker, by the time we finish our budget proposal that we will be able to reverse this proposal.

DISTRACTIONS AND OBSTRUCTIONS IN CAMPAIGN FINANCE INVESTIGATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House this afternoon after the proceedings that took place today. I am really concerned about the process of the House of Representatives and its investigative ability.

Today we saw an attempt to besmirch the reputation and interfere with the congressional investigation of campaign financing abuses in the 1996 election. Personally, I am quite disturbed by what we saw take place. I think it backfired on the other side of the aisle, and I think that they were surprised that some of their colleagues from the other side of the aisle joined with this side in voting down this unprecedented interference in the congressional investigative process.

The issue is not the Chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight; the issue is, in fact, the delay, the diversion, the distraction, and the very obstruction of

the congressional investigation process. I am really concerned about what again has taken place. We saw action on the floor today.

This is a situation that is very serious. For the first time in the history of our Federal elections process, we have seen an attempt to influence congressional and presidential elections by foreign money, foreign resources in our campaign process. Now we see an attempt to close down that investigation.

I have served on the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight and its predecessor since I came to Congress in 1993. That is one of the most important committees and responsibilities in this Congress.

It was founded and established by our Founding Fathers for a purpose, because they did not trust the appropriators, they did not trust the legislators, the authorizers; they wanted a third check and balance on the conduct and operation of our governmental system.

That is where the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight got its very roots and bearing. That is the difference between our system of governments and other democratic system of governments is that check and balance.

To close down that investigation, to divert the attention on the chairman is a misuse of power and responsibility in this House of Representatives, and I take great offense to it.

We have seen, again, unprecedented amounts of money, and our committee has been investigating. It may be too bad that it comes to the door of the White House, but it should be disclosed. It should be investigated. It cannot be shut down.

When the other side says that they will close down the proceedings of the House as far as investigation, when the Department of Justice says we agree that we will grant immunity and allow you to grant immunity for cooperation of these witnesses, and they try to divert attention from that and block us from investigating, they have shut down this process. It is an affront to every Member of Congress. It should be an affront to every citizen. It should be an affront to the media that they are trying to divert, to stall, and obstruct this process. The process will go forward.

I happen to be the only Member of the House that serves on both the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight and also on the Committee on House Oversight. It will come to one of those committees, or it will come to the floor. This matter will be thoroughly investigated as the Founding Fathers intended and as our congressional process and constitutional process require.

We have seen, now, the influx of Indonesian money, Chinese money, Thai money, Venezuelan money, Russian money, and convicted drug dealers' money into this process. In this process, the American people want to know the answers. Is this affecting our policy if our ports are given away? If we have

imported Chinese weapons into this country, killing Americans, who is responsible? If we have a major Chinese cigarette manufacturer influencing our policy and contributing to our campaigns and influencing our elections? Let it all hang out.

I am personally offended by what they have tried to do here today to our Chairman who has on every occasion acted in an honorable fashion. I think a disruption of this process is a shame on this House of Representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RULES COMMITTEE MEETING

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules is scheduled to meet in 3 minutes today to consider a rule providing general debate only for H.R. 3616, the Defense Authorization Bill for Fiscal Year 1999.

We will meet at 3 o'clock next Tuesday to make in order other amendments to that legislation. The rule that we will put out today will be for general debate only.

Mr. Speaker, additionally, unfortunately, the minority leadership has decided to personally attack Members of the majority side this morning on the House floor. Also, there has been a decision by the minority to oppose on two occasions immunity for four witnesses which the Department of Justice approved before a House investigative committee.

Due to these unfortunate circumstances which the minority has brought to the House floor, the Committee on Rules will add to its afternoon agenda the following measures: H.Res. 432, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the President's assertion of executive privilege; and H.Res. 433, by myself, calling upon the President of the United States to urge full cooperation by his former political appointees and friends and their associates with congressional investigations.

Mr. Speaker, these measures will be considered on the House floor next week under an appropriate rule. Since the Democratic leadership has regrettably decided to embroil the floor in this kind of partisan and personal attacks, the House will consider resolutions next week which will bring some perspective to the current discussion of ethics in Washington, D.C.

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TOBACCO FARMING IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McKEON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, there has been much discussion about to-

bacco settlements. If Congress is serious about passing tobacco settlement legislation this session, we need to act in a measured and collaborative way.

Let me say, though, that I do not smoke and I do not encourage others to smoke, and indeed, I support the efforts to discourage our teenagers from smoking. However, the decision to smoke is one best left to mature adults, and even then, after careful consideration. Children should not smoke, nor should they be enticed to smoke, and therefore, a public policy discouraging them from smoking and having enforcement to make sure that tobacco companies do not entice them is indeed appropriate.

With regard to the pending tobacco settlement, no matter how you feel about tobacco, one must view it for what it is; it is a legal commodity, grown by many American farmers.

These North Carolina farmers, our tobacco farmers, want the same thing as other Americans: a good quality of life overall for them and their families, for their children to have a good education, for them to have sufficient resources with which to provide their families with food, shelter and other amenities of life, saving for their retirement, a secure environment in which to live and to work, and most importantly, hope for the future.

These farmers, our tobacco farmers, care about their children as well as about other children in their community, instilling in them the values of honesty, hard work and a sense of community.

Mr. Speaker, like other American farmers, like those in your home State, these North Carolina farmers prepare their land, till it carefully, plant their crops, tend their fields, harvest their yields and market their products, much like commodities such as corn and wheat.

Tobacco is one of the main reasons that many small farmers are still able to stay in business, because no other crop yields as much income per acre. Most of these farmers are unable to find an alternative crop, although several of them are seeking them. To find an alternative crop with a comparative income indeed has eluded many. It would take almost eight times more acres of cotton, 15 times more acres of corn, 20 times more acres of soybeans, and 30 times more acres of wheat to equal the income from a single acre of tobacco.

The money earned by farmers and those employed in tobacco-related businesses flows into their communities, spreading these profits around. It has been estimated that the agricultural dollar turns over an average of 10 times in the farming local community. Do the math: \$7.7 billion, which is estimated as the income to our State, equals \$77 billion. \$77 billion flows from those citizens who sell the seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, farm machines, groceries, clothing, as well as other important goods and services.

These monies make life possible, bearable, and sometimes even determine the quality of life in rural communities. That revenue also streams into the county, State and Federal tax coffers, supporting education and health care.

The total income impact is also felt in terms of jobs. Over 108,650 North Carolinians are tobacco farmers or are employed in tobacco-related jobs. Therefore, it is absolutely critical, as we continue the process from which a settlement will emerge, and it should go forward, that those who are in the House as well as those in the Senate should permit these hard-working farmers to continue to earn an honest living doing what they do best, farming, and sometimes, growing tobacco.

The public policy to restrain young people from smoking is an appropriate one. Equally as important, as we seek this public policy, we should not have a public policy that brings great devastation on large numbers of unintended victims; and I submit to you, the rural communities and farmers are unintended victims.

Mr. Speaker, these small farmers are essential to the continuation of agriculture in North Carolina and the vitality of our rural areas.

ORIGINAL COSPONSORSHIP OF H.R. 3868, THE BIPARTISAN NO TO- BACCO FOR KIDS ACT OF 1998

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California, Mr. BILBRAY, is recognized five minutes.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 3868, the Bipartisan No Tobacco for Kids Act of 1998. This legislation, which was authored by my colleagues, Representatives JAMES HANSEN and MARTY MEEHAN, is aimed exclusively at preventing kids from smoking and reducing the adverse health effects of tobacco on children.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 3,000 kids each day become regular cigarette smokers. In light of recent statistics that shows youth smoking on the rise, I believe it is imperative that we act assertively here in Congress to crack down on youth smoking and access to tobacco.

Before I came to Washington, D.C., I served on the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and was responsible for passing one of the most stringent anti-smoking ordinances in the country. Because of my prior commitment to and involvement with this issue at the local level, and the startling statistics that show youth smoking on the rise, I am only too glad to support H.R. 3868 as an original cosponsor. H.R. 3868 is the only anti-tobacco bill in Congress (including the Senate) which has received the endorsement of former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and former Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner David Kessler. In fact, Koop and Kessler stated that other bills in both the House and Senate do not go far enough to reduce and prevent youth smoking.

This legislation establishes strong financial disincentives for tobacco companies that do